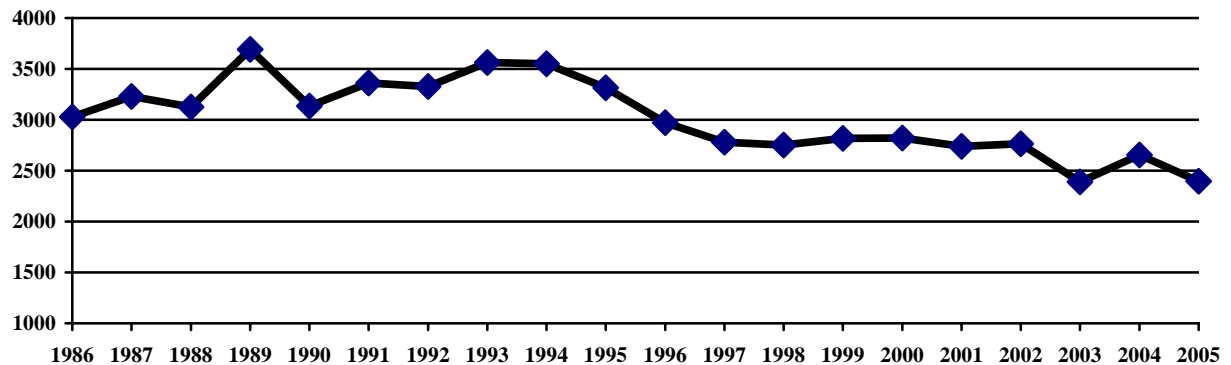


L A R C E N Y

is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket-picking, thefts from motor vehicles, thefts of auto parts and accessories, horse thefts, and bicycle thefts, in which no use of force, violence, fraud, or trespass occurs. In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this crime category does not include embezzlement, "con" games, forgery, and worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category, as it is a separate crime index offense.

**Twenty Year Review:
Larceny in Cambridge, 1986-2005**



2,654 reported in 2004 • 2,396 reported in 2005

Larceny is the most common of the Part One crimes, accounting for just over 60% of the serious crime total. Larceny often produces the most patterns. Numbers and patterns will undoubtedly remain high as we continue into the 21st century. The three categories that produced some of the highest numbers – larcenies from buildings, motor vehicles, and persons – are often fueled by changes in technology. As electronics such as laptops, cellular phones and portable music players evolve, they become easier to steal, conceal, and ultimately sell. Despite the high number of incidents reported, it remains unclear how accurately this number reflects the actual number of larcenies committed. Larceny remains one of the most underreported crimes. Note that the larceny total only includes incidents reported to the Cambridge Police.

Larceny is further broken down into the nine categories listed below. As can be seen from the table, there was an overall decrease in larceny totals this year in comparison to 2004 numbers. The exceptions were larceny of bicycles and shoplifting, both of which increased by five percent.

Categorization	2004	2005	% Change
Larcenies from Buildings	572	539	-6%
Larcenies from MV	734	615	-16%
Larcenies of Bicycles	229	241	5%
Larcenies from Persons	381	343	-10%
Shoplifting	383	403	5%
Larcenies of Services	30	19	-37%
Larcenies from Residences	226	175	-23%
Larcenies of License Plates	67	42	-37%
Other (Unclassifiable) Larcenies	32	19	-41%

LARCENY FROM BUILDINGS

Larcenies from Buildings are non-burglary thefts from commercial establishments. “Non-burglary” means that either the offender had a specific right to be on the premises, or that the building was open to the general public, and that no force was used to gain entry to the building where the theft was committed.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN BY BUSINESS DISTRICT		
Area	2004	2005
Galleria/East Cambridge	104	86
Kendall Square/MIT	31	37
Inman Square	35	30
Central Square	82	87
Cambridgeport/Riverside	26	26
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	50	47
Harvard Square	90	78
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	46	52
Porter Square	37	36
Alewife/West Cambridge	71	60

There were 539 larcenies from buildings reported this year. This total represents a 6% decrease from the previous year, and is consistent with the five-year average of 535 incidents annually. Larceny from building has shown a steady decline over the past decade.

The following are the most common larceny from building scenarios:

TOP 5 HOT SPOTS OF 2005

1. Cambridgeside Galleria Mall
100 Cambridgeside Place - 51 incidents
2. Bally’s Health Club
1815 Massachusetts Avenue – 33 incidents
3. Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
459 Broadway – 27 incidents
4. Hyatt Regency Hotel
575 Memorial Drive – 9 Incidents
5. YMCA
820 Massachusetts Avenue – 8 Incidents

1. The theft of forgotten property at a business. For example a shopper forgets his/her wallet at a store counter after paying. When the victim returns to the location, the property is gone. Thirteen percent (13%) of incidents reported occurred in this manner.

2. A thief walks into an office building during open business hours, posing as a delivery person or claiming to be looking for an employee that does not exist. The thief moves unnoticed into an empty office and takes personal or company property. Wallets and laptops are favorite targets. This scenario accounted for 12% of the total reported larcenies from buildings.

3. A thief asks to see store property, such as a ring at a jewelry store, and when the salesperson turns or is not looking, the thief pockets the property and flees the establishment with the merchandise. Approximately 12% of reported larceny from building incidents were of this nature.

4. A thief waits for or finds the opportunity to steal property left unattended in classrooms or left unlocked in school desks or lockers. This scenario accounted for 11% of the total reported.

5. Someone leaves his or her belongings unattended for a short time, such as leaving a coat in a public coat closet, and then comes back to find the property missing. In 11% of incidents property was stolen in this manner.

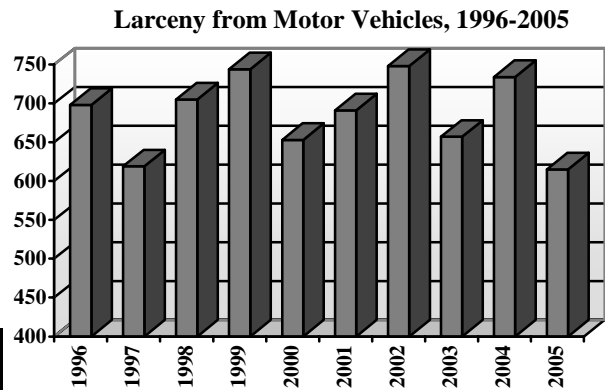
6. A thief pries open a locker at a fitness club, commonly targeting credit cards for unauthorized use. In 2005 11% of larceny from building incidents occurred in this manner.

LARCENY FROM MOTOR VEHICLES

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles involve an offender either breaking into a car and stealing valuables within or stealing an exterior accessory (such as tires and hubcaps) from an automobile.

Larcenies from motor vehicles reached a significant low over the past decade, at 615 incidents, a 16% decrease from the previous year. This year's incidents were over 70 reports below the five-year average of 691 annual incidents. The majority of neighborhoods experienced decreases in larceny from motor vehicles. While Strawberry Hill incurred the greatest increase in car breaks, Mid-Cambridge experienced the most significant decrease.

Neighborhood	2004	2005	% Change
East Cambridge	86	62	-28%
MIT	18	16	-11%
Inman/Harrington	52	30	-42%
Area 4	70	54	-23%
Cambridgeport	94	89	-5%
Mid-Cambridge	93	65	-30%
Riverside	39	43	10%
Agassiz	40	29	-28%
Peabody	76	61	-20%
West Cambridge	68	76	12%
North Cambridge	60	53	-12%
Cambridge Highlands	22	16	-27%
Strawberry Hill	15	21	40%
Unknown	1	0	Inc



Overall, trends in larceny from motor vehicle have been the regular theft of stereos by breaking windows. Hondas continued to be the most targeted car make for stereo thefts, but unlike the popular entry via a broken window, Honda's are regularly entered by unknown means, incidents in which no damage can be detected to indicate a method of entry. The increase in larceny from motor vehicles can be attributed, in part, to two patterns that have risen from the past years. The two recurrent patterns, which were experienced throughout the city, in larceny from motor vehicle were: theft of headlights and later in the year the theft of GPS navigation systems. The trend of Honda and Acura tires decreased this year in comparison to 2004 incidents, but is still a continuous problem in the city.

IN FOCUS: GPS NAVIGATION SYSTEM THEFTS

A new trend in larceny from motor vehicle in Cambridge this year was the theft of Global Positioning System (GPS) navigation systems. Global Positioning uses satellites to pinpoint the user's location, locate the position of the technology (i.e. navigation system in a vehicle or cellular phone), and report that to the user. GPS systems in vehicles are used to direct a driver from one location to another, providing the driver with instructions of where to make necessary turns to arrive at a given destination. GPS navigation systems have become a more popular option that comes installed in many new vehicle models. Like any other new technology that becomes popular, the advancements in GPS technology have also made this an affordable feature for owners of older models to add to their vehicles.

Three percent of all reported car breaks involved the theft of GPS systems, 21 incidents in all. This is a significant increase over 2004, when only four incidents of GPS system thefts were reported. No incidents

of GPS thefts were reported until May of 2005, but the trend peaked during the month of December, when two thirds of all incidents were reported. These incidents were concentrated in East Cambridge, particularly at the Cambridgeside Galleria parking garage, as the result of a rash of thefts. In all but one of the GPS system car breaks, the thieves gained entry into the targeted vehicle by smashing a window, stole the GPS system, and in many cases, other visible property. The East Cambridge incidents were concentrated between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m., but in other areas the thefts took place at later hours and overnight. There was no pattern to the vehicle models of the cars targeted. The arrest of a suspect in early 2006 quieted this pattern after the new year. As we enter 2006, the theft of GPS navigation systems is a trend to watch.

IN FOCUS: HEADLIGHT THEFTS

Approximately seven percent of all reported larcenies from motor vehicles involved the theft or attempted theft of automobile headlights, a slight increase over reported headlight thefts and attempts were reported in 2004 and into 2005. Of those 42 incidents, 50% were headlight thefts from Audis. This trend of headlight theft from motor vehicles was seen on a very small scale in 2003, with only four incidents in 2004, the trend emerged as a citywide and regional problem. Incidents of this nature were ten times greater in 2004 when compared to 2003 incidents. Key observations concerning these thefts are:

- Incidents were highest in the month of February, with a concentration in Agassiz and Peabody on weekend days.
- Over 75% of tire theft incidents occurred between Thursday and Sunday, particularly between the hours of 1 a.m. and 3 a.m.
- In some instances, the same vehicles were targeted at different times of the year.



The theft of Audi headlights as a trend in larceny from motor vehicle has not only affected Cambridge, but has also affected surrounding jurisdictions, such as Somerville and Boston and has been seen in other parts of the east coast, such as New York and New Jersey.

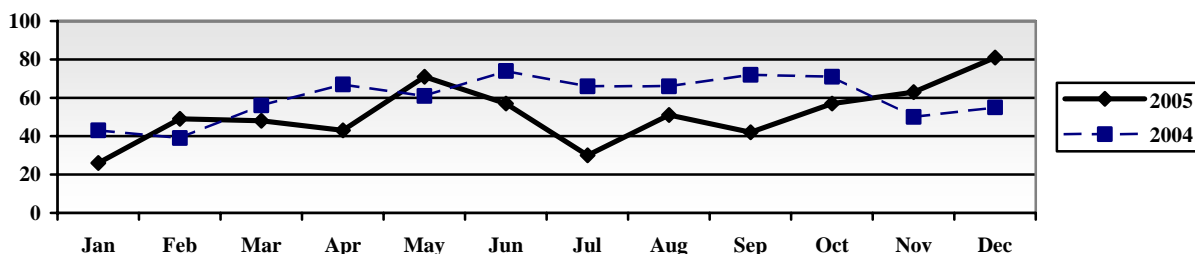
Top Three Methods of Entry

1. The most common method of entry into motor vehicles in 2005 was by breaking one or more windows of the vehicle. This method was reported in 35% of the incidents.
2. The second most common larceny from motor vehicle MO was the theft of exterior parts, which involved no entry to the vehicle. The theft of vehicle parts made up 20% of all car break incidents.
3. The third most common method of entry into motor vehicles was by unknown means. That is, that there are no signs of forced entry to the vehicle. This method was reported in 20% of reported incidents.

Top Ten Stolen Items of 2005

1. Car Stereos/CD players – 119 reported stolen
2. Auto Parts Misc. – 86 reported stolen
3. Cash – 53 reported stolen
4. CDs/Tapes – 43 reported stolen
5. Tires – 35 reported stolen
6. Bags – 30 reported stolen
7. Cellular Telephones – 27 reported stolen
8. Portable CD Player/Digital Music Player – 26 reported stolen
9. Misc. Electronics – 26 reported stolen
10. Clothing – 22 reported stolen

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Motor Vehicles



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Larcenies from motor vehicles have consistently averaged between 16-20% of the total serious crime index in Cambridge for over 20 years. This year's total is above this average, making up nearly 25% of all larceny. Nationally, thefts from vehicles made up 20% of all crime reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigations.
- For the first five years of the 1980s, Cambridge averaged 1,050 larcenies from motor vehicles. This average increased to 1,175 per year between 1986 and 1990. Between 1990 and 1995, incidents leveled off to between 850 and 900 incidents per year.
- Throughout 1996, the Cambridge Police Department assigned high priority to the early intervention of larceny from motor vehicle patterns. Target areas were flooded with directed patrols to combat chronic problem areas where spatial and temporal trends had been identified. The result of these efforts was the lowest larceny from motor vehicle total in 16 years. This number continued to decline in 1997.

LARCENY OF BICYCLES

Note: The Cambridge Police Department's bicycle theft statistics do not include thefts reported to the MIT or Harvard University Police Departments. These additional thefts could add several hundred to the theft total.

Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 584 in 1994. Since 1994, the crime has been steadily decreasing, with the exception of the slight increase reported in 2000. These declines reflect, perhaps, the increased publicity given to this crime, the greater availability of bicycle racks, and a crime-prevention conscious public.

After a steady three-year decline in larceny of bicycles, 2004 marked an increase in incidents which continued into 2005.

Not surprisingly, the majority of bicycle thefts fell in the summer months, when bicycles pack the streets and sidewalks. However, the high rate of incidents continued into the first months of fall, possibly due to the abnormally warmer months we saw in 2005. The highest number of thefts was reported in July and September. Temporally, the

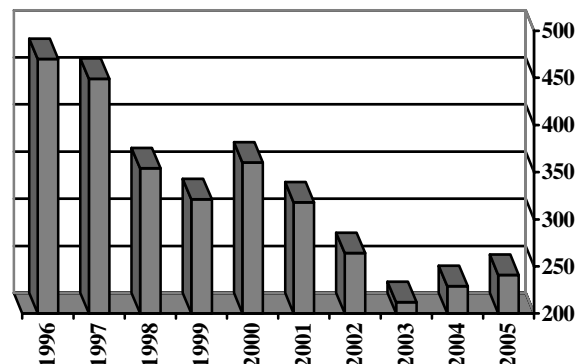
only reportable pattern is that the majority of incidents take place during the afternoon hours, when victims are at work or classes, with no concentration on any day of the week.

Incidents were scattered throughout busy commercial areas, where visitors and employees commute on bikes. Larceny of bicycle activity throughout the year was most concentrated in Harvard and Central Squares. Specific areas of repeat incidents included the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School premises and the Cambridge Galleria.

NEIGHBORHOOD	2004	2005
East Cambridge	15	20
MIT	7	4
Inman/Harrington	14	20
Area 4	23	34
Cambridgeport	21	22
Mid-Cambridge	34	29
Riverside	30	27
Agassiz	8	7
Peabody	12	19
West Cambridge	14	36
North Cambridge	36	16
Cambridge Highlands	4	7
Strawberry Hill	11	0
Unknown	15	0

Locks present little difficulty to bicycle thieves, who often bring bolt cutters or pry bars with them. Fifty-four percent of all reported bicycle thefts involved a locked and unattended bicycle on the street, sidewalk or rack. Unlocked bicycles that were on private property followed, making up 19% of reported incidents. These thefts occur in apartment building hallways, or when bicycles are left in private yards.

Bicycle Larceny, 1996-2005



LARCENIES FROM PERSONS

Larcenies from persons describes pocket-picking or any theft that occurs within the victim's area of control. The thefts are non-confrontational, and often the victim is not aware of the theft until after it has occurred. If any confrontation between offender and victim takes place, the crime is recorded as a robbery.

Typically, larcenies from persons dominate the larceny subcategories, but in 2005 it dropped to forth highest of all larceny types. Thefts from people shopping and dining in Harvard Square and the Central Square drove this total.

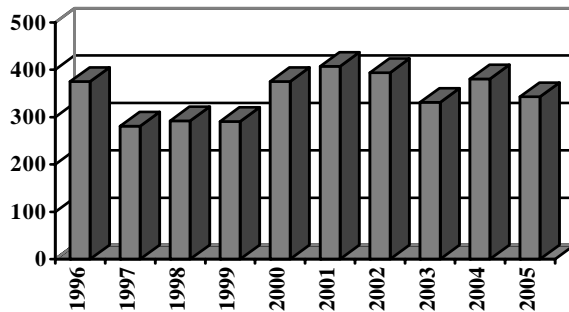
BUSINESS DISTRICT	2004	2005
Galleria/East Cambridge	44	45
Kendall Square/MIT	15	6
Inman Square/Harrington	18	15
Central Square	86	98
Cambridgeport/Riverside	6	7
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	14	9
Harvard Square	136	114
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	15	12
Porter Square/North Cambridge	23	12
Alewife/West Cambridge	24	25

The following represents three recurring scenarios that dominate larcenies from persons:

1. A diner places his or her jacket over the back of a chair, or places her purse under her chair. Someone sitting behind the victim goes through the coat or purse, taking the valuables within, or takes the coat or purse entirely. This accounted for 48% of larcenies from persons in 2005. Incidents at restaurants

and cafes located in Harvard and Central Square dominated this categorization. Concentrations were reported at and around The Garage in Harvard Square, between the 500 to 700 blocks of Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square and the Cambridgeside Galleria. Larcenies from person are generally easy to prevent. Remember to always keep your belongings within your control. Do not leave purses on the floor,

Larcenies from Persons, 1996-2005

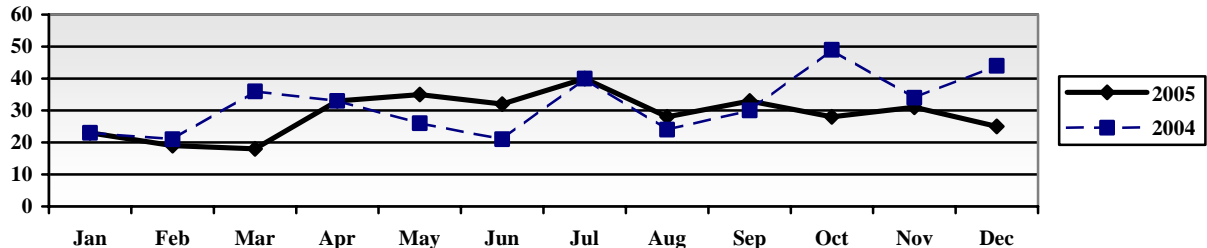


on the back of your chair, or otherwise unattended. Do not leave wallets or cell phones in the pockets of hanging coats.

2. A shopper, usually in a supermarket, keeps her purse in her shopping cart. While she is distracted selecting merchandise, someone pilfers the purse from the cart. This accounted for about 16% of reported thefts. The highest concentrations were at the Cambridgeside Galleria, the Porter Square retailers, and the shopping center at Alewife Brook Parkway.

3. While the victim is walking through a public place, a pickpocket stealthily reaches into the victim's coat, purse, or backpack and removes valuables. This scenario accounted for about 8% of the larceny from the person reports in 2005, but this percentage is ever decreasing. Pocket-picking requires a particular skill that modern criminals are increasingly failing to develop. Harvard Square and Central Square report the highest pocket-picking numbers, with concentrations in the early to mid-afternoons.

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Person



SHOPLIFTING

One of two larceny subcategories to increase in 2005, shoplifting incidents rose by five percent over 2004. The Cambridgeside Galleria and Central Square reported the most incidents, and Central Square also experienced the highest increase from last year. It is important to note however, that since shoplifting incidents are generally only reported when an arrest is made, underreporting is a serious problem. The actual shoplifting number may be six to ten times the statistic given in this report. This year over 50% of all reports did not result in an arrest. This rate indicates an increase in shoplifting reports, but a decrease in arrests.

Shoplifters usually fall into one of five categories:

1. **Juvenile Shoplifters** who steal on a dare, to impress their peers, to get an "adrenaline rush," or to compensate for lack of money.
2. **Impulse Shoplifters** who seize a sudden chance, such as an unattended dressing room or a blind aisle. Sometimes, the "impulse" is a long line or sudden lack of money.
3. **Alcoholics, vagrants, and drug addicts**, who steal erratically and clumsily. When caught, this type of shoplifter is more likely than others to get violent (see "Shop Owner/Patron" assaults in the Assault section).
4. **Kleptomaniacs** who steal to satisfy a psychological need.
5. **Professionals**, who steal expensive items and resell them to fences or "flea markets."

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2004	2005
Galleria/East Cambridge	146	134
Kendall Square/MIT	0	4
Inman Square/Harrington	3	4
Central Square	78	119
Cambridgeport/Riverside	8	13
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	3	4
Harvard Square	63	52
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	2	3
Porter Square/North Cambridge	31	31
Alewife/West Cambridge	49	39

LARCENY FROM RESIDENCES

Larcenies from Residences are non-burglary thefts from apartments, hallways, garages, and yards. “Non-burglary” means that no force or trespass was involved in the theft: the thefts are committed by people who have the right to be on the property. They include thefts committed by guests, roommates, family members, workers, and home health care providers. They also include thefts committed from common areas of apartment buildings, and thefts committed from property surrounding a house, such as the front yard, walkway, or tool shed.

Since larcenies from residences are usually committed by someone known to the victim, pattern identification and intervention by the police department is difficult. The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

NEIGHBORHOOD	2004	2005
East Cambridge	15	18
MIT	1	1
Inman/Harrington	20	15
Area 4	12	20
Cambridgeport	37	27
Mid-Cambridge	43	28
Riverside	23	12
Agassiz	7	6
Peabody	19	16
West Cambridge	18	16
North Cambridge	19	12
Cambridge Highlands	3	1
Strawberry Hill	9	3

- *Thefts committed by visitors or guests to a residence: 22%*
- *Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 15%*
- *Thefts committed by someone working in the apartment, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance man: 12%*
- *Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., “domestic thefts”): 10%*
- *Thefts of mail or packages delivered by a parcel service: 9%*
- *Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or storage area of an apartment building: 8%*

LARCENY OF SERVICES

This crime includes taxicab fare evasion, “dining and ditching,” “gassing and going,” and other failures to pay for services already rendered. There were 19 of these crimes reported in 2005. Nearly half of incidents involved gasoline theft, 21% each taxi fare evasion and restaurant check evasion. Evasion of auto repair and parking fees made up 11% of the total.

Please see the Protect Yourself section starting on page 137 for ways to protect yourself from larceny